

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for providing closed-loop operation for promotional events for a video gaming machine, the promotional events being associated with particular winning
5 criteria, the system comprising:

a controller box that is operable to interface to the video gaming machine;

a promotional server that is communicatively coupled to the controller box
and operable to:

maintain a database of promotional events with each promotional
10 event having promotional content, winning criteria and scheduling information;

deliver to the controller box, at least a portion of the database of
promotional events;

receive from the controller box, messages indicating that the
winning criteria for a particular promotional event has been met; and

15 the controller box being further operative to:

display promotional content on the display of the video gaming
machine;

monitor the activity of the video gaming machine to determine if
the winning criteria has been met; and

20 provide information indicating that the winning criteria for a
particular promotional event has been satisfied.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the promotional server includes a software
program that enables a user to define particular promotional events by:

defining an award to be associated with the promotional event;

25 defining a schedule for the promotional event;

defining the winning criteria for the promotional event;

receiving instructions to store the defined promotional event; and
storing the defined promotional event into the database.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the software program further comprises an interface to upload graphical and textual content to be included in the promotional
5 content.

4. The system of claim 2, wherein the software program further comprises an interface to create graphics and textual content to be included in the promotional content.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the controller box is operative to display the promotional content in accordance with the scheduling information.

10 6. The system of claim 1, wherein the controller box is further operative to receiving entertainment content from an entertainment source and to display the entertainment content on the display of the video gaming machine.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the video gaming machine is a video poker machine and the winning criteria for the promotional event identifies a particular
15 poker hand that is not included in the payout table of the video poker machine.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the video gaming machine is a video poker machine and the winning criteria for the promotional event identifies a particular poker hand.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the video gaming machine is a video
20 blackjack machine and the winning criteria for the promotional event identifies a particular blackjack hand that is not included in the payout table of the video blackjack machine.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the video gaming machine is a video blackjack machine and the winning criteria for the promotional event identifies a
25 particular blackjack hand.

11. A method for providing closed-loop operation for promotional events in a video gaming environment, the method comprising the steps of:

defining the parameters of a promotional event, the parameters including the winning criteria for the promotional event, the promotional event being independent
5 from, but not exclusive of, the standard winning criteria for the video gaming machines in the video gaming environment;

monitoring the activity of a video gaming machine to identify a winning event, the winning event comprising the satisfaction of the winning criteria during the active time period; and

10 recording information pertaining to the winning event.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of defining the parameters of the promotional event further comprises defining the award to be associated with the promotional event.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of recording information
15 pertaining to the winning event comprises recording:

the identification of a player operating the video gaming machine; and
the identification of the promotional event.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of recording information
pertaining to the winning event comprises recording:

20 the identification of a player operating the video gaming machine;
the identification of the video gaming machine; and
the identification of the promotional event.

15. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of restricting access to the recorded information to limit the potential for fraud

25 16. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of defining the parameters of the promotional event further comprises defining a schedule for the promotional event.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the step of defining a schedule for the promotional event further comprises the steps of:

defining an advertisement time period for displaying promotional content to advertise the promotional event; and

5 defining an active time period during which the promotional event is to be active.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising the steps of:

displaying promotional content during the defined advertisement time period.

10 19. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of monitoring the activity of the video gaming machines is performed during the defined active time period.

20. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of defining the promotional event further comprises defining a budgeted award amount and the step of monitoring the activity of the video gaming machine is limited to the active time period during which the
15 budgeted award amount has not been exhausted.

21. A controller box to be used in facilitating closed-loop operation for promotional events, the promotional events having winning criteria, the system comprising a controller box that is operable to:

20 interface to a display device to control the display of information pertaining to the promotional event;

monitor an information source that provides activity information;

determine when the activity information satisfies the winning criteria;

store a record indicating the satisfaction of the winning criteria for the promotional event; and

25 provide a means for retrieving the stored record.

22. The controller box of claim 21, further comprising an interface to an entertainment source to receive entertainment content and is further operable to display the entertainment content on the display device.

23. The controller box of claim 21, further comprising an interface to a promotional server for receiving information defining the promotional events.

24. The controller box of claim 21, wherein the information source is a video gaming machine and the activity information defines particular events occurring with the video gaming machine.

25. The controller box of claim 24, wherein the video gaming machine is a video poker machine and the activity information identifies particular hands.

26. The controller box of claim 24, wherein video gaming machine is a black jack machine and the activity information identifies particular hands.

27. The controller box of claim 24, wherein video gaming machine is a slot machine and the activity information identifies particular plays.

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